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Inside Information

United States Department
of Agriculture

Office of Public Affairs

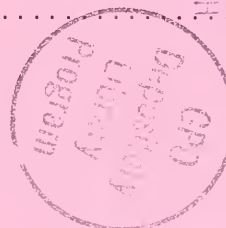
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INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Individual Items are sent electronically throughout the month to offices on the agricultural information network on the Dialcom Incorporated computer system. These items are then printed at the end of the month for distribution to all offices, including those which do not have access to the Dialcom mail network. Any items, comments or inquiries should be sent to Denver Browning, Editor, Programs and Planning, Office of Public Affairs, Room 536A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, or send to Browning's Dialcom mailbox AGR209, or call at (202) 447-2058. Communicators with USDA agencies, Land-Grant Universities and State Departments of Agriculture are encouraged to submit items to the editor for inclusion in both the electronic and printed versions.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although timely in the electronic version, some job announcements may reach you too late in hard copy due to the shortness of deadlines. Our policy is to include all electronic items in the end-of-month hard copy.

COMMUNICATION OF USDA POLICIES TO BE ENHANCED BY IMPLEMENTING 'ISSUE TEAMS'

How does USDA get the message out about its programs and activities? With that question in mind, USDA's Office of Public Affairs (OPA) recently began a new approach that it hopes will increase interaction between USDA's policymakers and communicators—the creation of "Issue Teams."

According to Paul Kindinger, OPA Director, the purpose of the Issue Teams is to develop and implement communications plans for USDA's activities in support of a number of specific initiatives. The initiatives include such areas as food safety, water quality, global climate change, agricultural biotechnology, animal welfare, rural development, the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations, and the 1990 Farm Bill.

Composed mostly of public affairs specialists from various program agencies and OPA, the role of the Issue Teams isn't to design policy, but to develop creative, innovative, and cost-effective strategies for communicating the policy to the public.

"All too often in the past," Kindinger said, "policy would be set and then—after the fact—someone would say, 'Oops, guess we need to figure out how we're going to communicate this,' so everyone would back up and have to start again from scratch. Or, public affairs communicators would devise a communication plan that didn't necessarily jive with the policy that was supposed to be communicated. This new approach integrates policy and public affairs all along the way, not just at the end."

The Issue Teams will take their cues from USDA's Policy Coordinating Council, composed of members of the Secretary's senior staff.

How will the success of these Issue Teams be judged down the line? Each Issue Team will have developed a bonafide plan with specific communication activities and carried out those activities. The issue itself will have been communicated well. Both the policy makers and the communicators will have developed and implemented a viable, practical policy and communicated it successfully to the appropriate food and agricultural audience.

USDA-EXTENSION SERVICE COMMUNICATOR ON U.S. TECHNICAL MISSION TO POLAND

Janet Poley, director of communication, information and technology for USDA's Extension Service, is a member of a team of seven U.S. agricultural experts who went to Poland as part of the United States' efforts to help establish an efficient, privatized agricultural economy in the European nation.

The team is headed by Myron D. Johnsrud, administrator of USDA's Extension Service.

Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter said the group will focus on determining Polish needs in agricultural education and technical assistance, especially as applied to private farm production and marketing.

The mission follows a technical assistance agreement signed in Warsaw on December 16, 1989, by Secretary Yeutter and officials of the Polish Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Economy, and the Ministry of Rural Life Quality.

The team will consult with Polish officials about development of a plan for establishing an agricultural extension system in the country.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA SATELLITE SYMPOSIUM ON DIET AND HEALTH SEEKS SITES

A University of California-Davis satellite symposium on May 11, will explore why people are vulnerable to nutrition and health misinformation and quackery.

The four-hour symposium, "Diet and Health: Combating Misinformation," will be on C-band from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time and will be available for registered satellite-receive (downlink) sites across the nation. At a later date, videotapes of the program will be available to sites without satellite-receive equipment.

The professional development program is aimed at nutritionists, home economists, dietitians, educators, and health-care professionals. Nutrition and health professionals in education, business, government and medical facilities, as well as colleges and universities, can host this professional development program for a site fee of \$200. Participants will be able to phone in questions for each speaker using toll-free numbers.

The symposium participants also will discuss how to combat misinformation about obesity and weight control, dietary fiber and fat, and nutrient supplements.

Speakers include Wayne Callaway, M.D. (associate clinical professor of medicine, George Washington University Medical Center); Barbara Schneeman, Ph.D. (professor of nutrition and chair, Department of Nutrition, University of California); Janet McDonald, Ph.D., R.D. (public affairs specialist, U.S. Food and Drug Administration); and William Jarvis, Ph.D. (president, National Council Against Health Fraud).

Applications for continuing education credits have been made for both the original satellite broadcast and the videotaped program for registered dietetic technicians and dietitians, certified home economists, dietary managers, nurses, physicians, and health educators.

Broadcast times in other time zones include: Eastern—Noon to 4 p.m., Central—11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Mountain—10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Pacific—9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and Alaska/Hawaii—7 a.m. to 11 a.m.

For more information about the program, how to register as a site, or Land Grant Universities and multi-site discounts, contact: Karen Berke, Agricultural Communications, University of California, Davis, CA 95616, or telephone 916-757-8949.

OHIO STATE UNIV. EXTENSION SERVICE DEVELOPING AFRICANIZED HONEY BEES MANUAL

USDA's Extension Service at Ohio State University is currently working on production of a manual on the Africanized honey bee.

The manual will address areas of Africanized honey bee biology, behavior, and colony manipulations. Each chapter will be distributed as an individual topic, allowing future revisions to be done to specific chapters without having to revise the entire booklet.

At the earliest, the publication is not expected to be completed until late summer.

For further information, contact: James E. Tew, National Program Leader, Apiculture, USDA Extension Service, Ohio State University, Wooster, OH 44691. Telephone is 216-264-3911.

CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION HAS NEW FACT SHEET SERIES TO HELP BUSY FAMILIES

Cornell University Cooperative Extension has a new fact sheet series, "Balancing Work and Family Life," to help families manage their time and money in better ways.

The series includes "Time: A Precious Commodity," "Changing Roles in a Changing World," "Flexible Work Arrangements," "Stress of Balancing Work and Family," "Let's Talk About Child Care," and "Employers and Child Care."

Series coordinator Christiann Dean, a member of the Extension faculty in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, notes that the series is designed to help busy employed parents understand how today's rapid changes affect their families, discover how others are handling these challenges, and find a balance that suits their own needs.

The series is available from Cornell University, 7 Research Park, Ithaca, NY 14850. The set of six costs \$3 for shipping and handling. Separately each fact sheet costs 75 cents.

For further information, contact Carol Doolittle at 607-255-7660.

IOWA STATE U. COLLEGE OF AG INFORMATION SERVICES NEEDS WRITER/INFO SPECIALIST

The Iowa State University College of Agriculture Information Services has an opening for a writer/information specialist.

Duties include writing news and feature articles on research and educational programs for internal publications and for distribution to the media, identifying appropriate editorial content, conducting interviews and other research, and writing copy (frequently requiring interpretation of highly technical editorial matter).

Other duties are working with photographers, illustrators, and graphic artists to design visuals to accompany editorial work; helping plan quarterly newsletter, annual report, and other information products; and writing or editing proposals, brochures, reports, and other information products.

Requirements include a B.S. in journalism or related area, three years experience, and evidence of superior writing skills. News writing experience, and experience in graphic design and photography is preferred.

Send four examples of best work, resume, and letter of application to: Karen F. Bolluyt, 304 Curtiss Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, IA 50011. Telephone is 515-294-6456.

EXPORT NETWORK, A CIDS SUBSCRIBER, BRINGS BUYERS AND SELLERS TOGETHER ONLINE

Charles Cadewell demonstrated his online computer service, Export Network, to USDA's CID (Computerized Information Dissemination) Users' Group at its regular monthly meeting on February 7.

Cadewell stressed the need to get a buyer and seller together, saying, "All the trade seminars on how to do business in Asia won't work if you don't get the buyer and seller together."

He said that everything Export Network does is to help companies complete export transactions more effectively and efficiently.

Export Network is a private industry subscriber to USDA's CID Service. CID is a computerized, high-speed online service that distributes current information in bulk to news and information services. The services subscribing to CID rewrite or enhance the material and repackage it for sale to their own clientele. Like Export Network, most provide the information online to their own subscribers.

Export Network specializes in offering trading services to companies involved in international trade. Subscribers to the Bethesda, Maryland-based service include exporters large and small, state governments and people and firms that advise exporters.

Trade leads that USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) gathers from around the world are the only information Cadewell uses from the CID Service. He takes every lead FAS sends—189 single-spaced pages of them during the first quarter of this fiscal year. Export Network subscribers can keyword search FAS leads and within seconds review them over the past six months, giving them trend information they can cash in on.

To make up his service, Cadewell mixes FAS trade leads with information from 50 other organizations. At the CID Users' Group meeting, he asked FAS representatives to load additional items into the CID Service. He said people like "one-stop shopping." Cadewell sends nothing through the mail to his subscribers.

During his demonstration, Cadewell explained the various menus in Export Network, and displayed the type of information in them and the keyword search and other features of the service.

For more information on the CID Service, contact Russell Forte, USDA, Office of Programs and Planning, Office of Public Affairs, Room 536-A, Washington, DC 20250, or telephone 202-447-5505. Dialcom E-mail is AGR205.

VETERAN COMMUNICATOR, CHIEF OF FORMER SPECIAL PROGRAMS DIVISION, HOSPITALIZED

Stan Prochaska, chief of the former Special Programs Division (now the Office of Programs and Planning, headed by Gretchen Gunter) suffered a heart attack on Saturday, February 10. He was admitted to the Fair Oaks Hospital Critical Care Unit in Fairfax, Virginia.

Diagnosed with 90 percent blockage of the large artery, Prochaska has been transferred to Fairfax Hospital where he will undergo surgery to remove the blockage. That failing, he will have emergency by-pass surgery.

Cards may be sent to: Fairfax Hospital, Coronary Care Unit, 3300 Gallows Rd., Falls Church, VA 22046. Home address: 4516 Andes Dr., Fairfax, VA 22030.

NEW DOCUMENTARY FROM CORNELL U. SHOWS HOW RESEARCHERS STUDY THE ENVIRONMENT

How do reseachers study the environment so they can help to make the world a better place for all? A new 18-minute documentary, "Altered Landscapes," shows what plant physiologists look for when they test plants in their native habitat or in research plots.

Produced by the Environmental Biology Program of the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research at the Cornell University campus in Ithaca, New York, the videotape tells a brief, but compelling story about the need to do basic and applied research today to help make a better environment for all.

Researchers are shown taking samples from the Adirondacks and working on controlled test plots in Ithaca. The narrator explains what the researchers are doing and why, and the camera follows them from the field and into the laboratory to show what the research means to the quality of our environment and life.

Used by educators, including Cooperative Extension agents, the program promises to reach out to the average person—and students—to explain the purpose and benefits of this research.

For more information on "Altered Landscapes," contact the AV Center, Cornell University, 8 Research Park, Ithaca, NY 14850. For a free list of Cornell Cooperative Extension video programs, contact the AV librarian.

EDUCATION OUTREACH TEAM MEMBERS TAKE 'EATING RIGHT' CAMPAIGN TO ATLANTA

On January 22-25, Educational Outreach ("E Team") members Susan Welsh, Eileen Newman, Dianne Odland (USDA's Human Nutrition Information Service), and Sally Katt (USDA's Office of Public Affairs, Programs and Planning) completed a media tour of Atlanta, Georgia, to promote USDA's "Eating Right...the Dietary Guidelines Way" Campaign.

Goals of the campaign are two-fold—to increase awareness of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and to help the public learn to apply the Dietary Guidelines in making everyday food choices.

Six radio and three television presentations were made, from community service local broadcasts to high-tech syndicated programs broadcast across the country.

Additionally, the team met with columnists from the ATLANTA JOURNAL AND CONSTITUTION, and representatives from Cable News Network (CNN), the State Department of Education, the Public Health Service, and the Extension Service.

The "Eating Right..." message was well received by all and Team members have been invited back to Atlanta. Upcoming media tours are planned for Denver and Chicago.

For more information, call Dianne Odland or Eileen Newman, 301-436-5724.

NEW CORNELL COOPERATIVE EXTENSION PUBLICATION ON 'GROWING BUTTON MUSHROOMS'

A Cornell Cooperative Extension publication, "Growing Button Mushrooms," provides information on how and where to grow "agaricus bisporus." The cultivated button mushroom can be grown at home with proper equipment and care. A list of equipment needed, and sources of mushroom-growing kits and spawn is provided.

The publication covers the stages of growth from spawning to casing to harvest. The author notes that after the first mushrooms appear and are harvested, more will emerge in flushes—every 10 to 13 days for 3 to 6 months until the compost is exhausted. The mushrooms can be picked at various stages. Mature button mushrooms do not store well and for this reason are never seen in supermarkets, but they have the best flavor and are delicious in sauces or special dishes.

Copies of "Growing Button Mushrooms" are available from the Cornell University Distribution Center, 7 Research Park, Ithaca, NY 14850. The per-copy price of \$1.25 covers printing, postage and handling. Copies also are available at Cornell Cooperative Extension County offices throughout New York State, where prices may vary. For a complete list of publications, contact the Distribution Center in Ithaca, or any of the Extension offices.

'FRUIT: SOMETHING GOOD THAT'S NOT ILLEGAL, IMMORAL, OR FATTENING' FROM CIC

An apple a day keeps the doctor away. Why? Because apples are fruit, and fruit is one of the best things you can put in your diet.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has produced a new publication, "Fruit: Something Good That's Not Illegal, Immoral, or Fattening," that gives you even more reasons to choose berries over bonbons.

Fruit has fiber, minerals, vitamins, carbohydrates, and other health promoters, but very little fat and fewer calories. Fruit also has little or no sodium and no cholesterol.

Most fruits are fiber-rich, but dried fruits such as raisins, dates, prunes, and apricots are concentrated storehouses for fiber and a variety of minerals including iron and potassium. But dried fruits have a higher concentration of natural sugars because all their water has been removed, so they are higher in calories. Another thing to consider is the process used for drying fruits—possible dipping in a sulfate solution. Sulfites can cause allergic reactions, so people sensitive to these preservatives should read ingredient labels carefully. The FDA now requires that sulfites be listed on ingredient labels of packaged foods that contain them.

For a free copy of the new publication, send your name and address to: Consumer Information Center, Department 524W, Pueblo, CO 81009. At the same time you also will receive a free copy of the Consumer Information Catalog. Published quarterly, the catalog lists about 200 free and low-cost federal booklets on a wide variety of subjects.

ACE'S 'THE COMMUNICATOR'S HANDBOOK: TECHNIQUES AND TECHNOLOGY' IS A WINNER

Making any government or university communicator look, sound, and read better is the goal of "The Communicator's Handbook: Techniques and Technology," a new book written by members of the international association, Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE).

"USDA and university professionals today are faced with communicating complex and controversial issues to many diverse audiences. This book can help you do that job better, no matter what the medium," states Patricia Calvert, editor of the new handbook. Calvert is deputy director, USDA Extension Communications-CIT.

True to its title, The Communicator's Handbook covers basic techniques for communicating through newsletters, news releases, and other print publications, in radio and television interviews and on videotape; and visually with chapters covering graphic design, posters, exhibits and photography, and slide-tape presentations. Other chapters cover emerging technology, such as USDA's Computerized Information Delivery (CID) Service and USDA Online services, desktop publishing, teleconferencing, the role of computers in education and training, and interactive video. Crisis management, strategic communication planning, and media relations also are among the 20 chapters in the 314-page book.

"It's comprehensive, easy to understand, and it's versatile. Many universities are using it for training Extension staff, or in volunteer or agent training seminars. Several communications and journalism schools also have adopted it for classrooms, and international communicators are finding it useful, too," Calvert notes.

The Communicator's Handbook costs \$25.95, postpaid, USA, and is available through Maupin House Publishing, P.O. Box 90148, Gainesville, FL 32607. Telephone is 904-336-9290. Per copy price for 10 or more books is \$14.95 pp. Payment by check, purchase order, or Master Card/VISA. International orders are shipped surface unless air freight is requested and payment arrangements made.

By the way, your INSIDE INFORMATION editor's picture is in the handbook on page 213, shown hard at work at his computer (and wearing reading glasses, due to his advanced years).

'AGRICULTURE INFORMATION ALUMNI ASSOCIATION' SCHEDULES ANOTHER GET-TOGETHER

The "Agriculture Information Alumni Association" has scheduled another get-together for May 14, 11:30 a.m., at the National Press Club, Washington, D.C. The "unofficial" group is made up of present, past, and long-past USDA information folks, and even some that go wa-a-a-y back. The object is to provide an opportunity to share ideas, information, and memories—but mostly just a chance for old acquaintances to get-together once again.

The past get-togethers, last May and Last November, seemed to work pretty good and were well-received and well-attended, so this get-together is being done the same way. The most acclaimed feature of the previous get-togethers was the absolute absence of a program. An encore is planned.

A lot of people who live out of the Washington area, have expressed interest in attending, but need time to plan ahead—the May 5 deadline for signing up should allow ample time.

If you'd like to join in, send a check for \$26 to: Phil Fleming, 9134 Kirksdale Road, Bethesda, MD 20817. If you have any questions, call: Ed Curran (301-588-6393), Phil Fleming (301-530-7488), or Jim McMahon (301-864-3638).

MINNESOTA'S TWIN CITIES TO BE SITE OF ACE INTERNATIONAL MEETING JULY 14-17

Minnesota Agricultural Communicators in Education (ACE) invite you to the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis, July 14-17, for the annual ACE International meeting. Last year's meeting, hosted by Oregon State University, was held in Portland.

This year's conference, hosted by the University of Minnesota, will take place at the Radisson Hotel in downtown St. Paul on the banks of the Mississippi River.

This year's theme is "Thriving in the '90s, and the program committee has designed four days of events to stimulate ACE members into confronting issues at hand as we enter a new decade—issues that will challenge our effectiveness as communicators.

The conference will open on Sunday morning by recognizing ACE Critique and Award Program winners and their work. Myron Johnsrud, USDA Extension Service Administrator, will give the keynote address after lunch, followed by a panel that will talk about "What must communicators do to ensure their effective in the '90s?" New Mexico State's Terry Canup will be on next with survey results on "Our future in agricultural

communications,” featuring responses from land grant university administrators and agricultural communications unit heads. Sunday’s activities will conclude with the annual ACE Awards Banquet.

Monday will be devoted entirely to SIG (Special Interest Group) activities. The day will be arranged so that ACE members can attend activities in more than one SIG. SIG chairs have already planned some exciting options that will be announced later.

Tuesday, following regional breakfasts, you’ll bus to the University of Minnesota’s St. Paul Campus. There you can choose from four sessions: team building/increasing personnel capacities, media selection/audience analysis, eye-tracking (fascinating research on what attracts and holds attention to the human eye), and management issues in using new technologies. These sessions will be presented twice.

A technology vendor fair—“ACE Showcase”—will take place concurrently with and between the above sessions. Examples of what you can expect include computer graphics, desktop publishing, FAX equipment, an electronic news distribution system, software for automatic slide labeling, network systems, CD-ROM, voice mail, video and audio equipment, exhibit/display systems, laptop computers, editing software, distance delivery systems, video wall, and more.

Wednesday will be open for optional tours.

Watch for your pre-registration packet in April, or write or call with any questions to: ACE 1990 Host Committee, EDS, 405 Coffey Hall, University of Minnesota, 1420 Eckles Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108. Phone 612-625-4261 or 625-4248.

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CALENDAR OF UPCOMING COMMUNICATION EVENTS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

March 5-6:

SPEECHWRITING FOR RESULTS - RAGAN REPORT WORKSHOP

The Hotel 21 East, Chicago, Illinois

Contact: 312-922-8261, or Fax 312-922-3336

March 7:

ADVANCED WRITING & EDITING TECHNIQUES - RAGAN REPORT WORKSHOP

The Hotel 21 East, Chicago, Illinois

Contact: 312-922-8261, or Fax 312-922-3336

March 8-9:

SPEECHWRITING FOR RESULTS - RAGAN REPORT WORKSHOP

The Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Contact: 312-922-8261, or Fax 312-922-3336

March 14:

ADVANCED WRITING & EDITING TECHNIQUES - RAGAN REPORT WORKSHOP

The Mayflower Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Contact: 312-922-8261, or Fax 312-922-3336

April 28-29:

ANNUAL HEALTH AND FOOD WRITERS CONFERENCE

L'Enfant Plaza Hotel, Washington, D.C.

Contact: Gordon Zwirkoski, 708-655-8866

July 11 - August 7:

COMMUNICATION PLANNING AND STRATEGY WORKSHOP/SEMINAR

Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

Contact: Dr. Royal D. Colle, 607-255-6500

July 14-17:

INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL COMMUNICATORS IN EDUCATION (ACE) MEETING

Radisson Hotel, St. Paul, Minnesota

Theme: "Thriving in the '90s"

Contact: Dave McAllister, Publicity Chair, ACE, c/o Educational

Development System, 405 Coffey Hall, 1420 Eckles Avenue,

St. Paul, MN 55108 Telephone 612-625-4261 or 625-4248
